

CURRENT TOPICS

SEVERAL CABINET changes are likely to occur during the early part of 1906. In a letter to a friend in Iowa, Secretary Shaw says that he expects to retire from the treasury department in February. Washington correspondents seem generally to agree that Secretary of the Navy Bonaparte will succeed Mr. Moody as attorney general. Several correspondents say that Mr. Bonaparte accepted the position at the head of the navy with the understanding that within a year he would be transferred to the office of attorney general.

JOHN F. LUMPKIN OF KANSAS CITY has received from his late father's estate a consular commission signed by Andrew Jackson. Referring to this relic the Kansas City Journal says: "The chirography of the president is bold and as fresh in appearance as though made but a year or two ago. The document is dated September 16, 1836, and was issued through the office of John Forsythe, President Jackson's secretary of state. The commission was issued to the late Thomas Lumpkin, grand uncle of the present John E. Lumpkin. It was the credential which Mr. Lumpkin took with him to Buenos Ayres, to be consul of the port of Buenos Ayres and such other ports as may be nearer thereto than to the residence of any other consul or vice consul within the said allegiance."

JOHN A. McCALL, president of the New York Life Insurance company, has issued to the agents of that company a circular letter in which, while seeking to justify his unauthorized contributions to the republican campaign fund, he says: "The question of similar contributions cannot arise again," and he promises to ask the board of trustees to pass a resolution prohibiting such contributions. Referring to this McCall letter, Louis F. Post, writing in "The Public" says: "McCall says he will ask his board to prevent his ever doing it again; but if the law did not serve to check him in the past, can a directors' resolution be depended upon to do it in the future, should economic questions affecting assets, whether in the ledger or out of it, get into politics?"

A PARIS PUBLICATION, *Monde Illustré*, describes a relief service that has been established in Berlin and which, if it proves to be practicable, will be extended to all of the Russian cities and probably throughout Germany. This is called the "Special Providence Service for the Intoxicated." The description given by the Paris publication is translated by the *Literary Digest* in this way: "The service is entirely in the hands of women, who wear a uniform similar to that of the Salvation Army. The object of the simple uniform is that the women shall be entirely free in her movements, and at the same time appeal to the intoxicated man or woman entirely by virtue of her womanhood. The members of the service are constantly at work; they are assigned to certain sections of the city and usually work in pairs. This, however, is not an invariable rule, and when an intoxicated man or woman is found by one of the officers alone, another member of the service is summoned by means of a whistle. The intoxicated person is then helped to his or her feet and guided to the nearest station. If the degree of intoxication is such that the person can not walk, then the members of the service literally carry the helpless creature to a place of shelter. As may be readily understood, the work is beset with difficulties. A remark made by the *Monde Illustré* is of interest: 'It is certainly significant that women should be chosen for this work, for it is conclusive evidence of the fact that the world is realizing more and more the value of appealing in every case to the higher instincts. We believe this to be the only course, in social reformation and progress.'"

ROBERT E. RETES, of Guadalajara, Mexico, writing to *The Commoner* says: "I have lately seen in American newspapers many sneering allusions to the supposed 'discomforture' of Mr. Bryan, when his model silverites' the Mexi-

cans, adopted the gold standard. As a matter of fact, the gold standard in Mexico was not adopted by the people, but by a group of financiers headed by J. Y. Limantour, the minister of finance. It was purely a bankers' measure. Both silver and gold mines are injured by it, the former because the mint market for silver bars is gone, and the latter because their product no longer calls for a high price in money that it did; many mines have shut down, and as mining is the principal industry of the country, railroad freights on ores have diminished greatly, and the smelters also receive less product than formerly. The prices of imported commodities have not fallen. Already the scarcity of coin in some parts is driving the people to the use of paper money issued by the banks. All claims that the change to the gold standard has benefited Mexico are inventions."

E. W. SWEeley, a justice of the peace in Royalsock, Lycoming county, Pa., claims the record for office holding in that state. Referring to Justice Sweeley a writer in the Kansas City Journal says: "Altogether he has held various township and county offices whose terms aggregate 109 years during his life of sixty-eight years, and he is still adding to his record. Mr. Sweeley is a democrat, and that he is popular is shown by his record, as follows: justice of the peace, thirty-five years; assessor, twenty-six years; supervisor, eight years; school director, fifteen years; overseer of the poor, six years; township auditor, twelve years; county auditor, four years; jury commissioner, three years."

WITH ALL MAN'S BOASTED WISDOM the question "What is Electricity" remains unsolved. Referring to this problem a writer in the *Scientific American* says: "Some eminent scientific men are befogged by the question, say it is some ultimate unknowable thing, and hopeless as an inquiry. If it be a something it must be described by its constant properties as other things are. If it be unlike everything else then it cannot be described by terms that apply to anything else. A glowing coal is an incandescent solid, a flame is an incandescent gas, but neither glow nor flame exists apart from the matter that exhibits the phenomenon. Both are conditions of particular kinds of matter."

COLONEL SIDNEY C. TAPP, a well known Atlanta attorney recently delivered an address on the trust question, which address has attracted widespread attention. In this address Colonel Tapp said: "Every age has had menaces to its civilization and it has been the burden of every civilization to overcome these menaces and to survive. The Romans were menaced with the national pride to conquer other people; the early French with their burning desire for crusades; the Goths with their barbarian desire to destroy other peoples and human lives in order to conquer. All through the ages the human family have suffered in its efforts to secure influence and power. This was the curse of Charlemagne's empire, the curse of the Goths and the Northmen, the curse of the Slavonic peoples, the curse of Napoleon and the Latin races. Some races have desired power in war, others power in ecclesiastical affairs, other powers in priestcraft and statecraft, but in all ages it has been the desire for illegitimate power that has destroyed all the past civilizations. With us, the American people, it is not the desire for power at the point of the bayonet, it is not the desire for power in priestcraft and kingcraft that is killing us, but it is the desire for power in commerce that is destroying our civilization. A few men in our age and civilization have become more powerful than all the kings and monarchs of other ages and these same men have become greater enemies of organized society than the despots or tyrants of all of the monarchies of the old world."

CHARGING THAT "even the clergy of our generation are paying homage to these plutocrats who have become more powerful than the government by plundering the masses," Colonel Tapp demanded to know whether we

had reached "that point in our civilization when the mouth of the ministry is to be closed by filthy dollars and our institutions, the fountain source of our civilization, are to be poisoned and polluted with the corruption of the unholy dollars of these men?" He declared that "we are face to face with the issue," adding: "As a nation and as a people we must destroy the power of these men or they will destroy our civilization. The issue must be met. The laws of supply, demand and competition must be restored in our civilization so that the wealth of the country will take its natural channels and be distributed among the masses of our people—upon this principle depends the stability of our government and the perpetuity of our civilization. There can be no compromise on this issue."

CONCLUDING HIS excellent address, Colonel Tapp said: "It was a great day the human family reached that degree in civilization when they discovered that one man did not govern a nation by Divine right. It was a great day in the world's history when the apostle Paul stood on Mars hill and preached the doctrine of the Man of Nazareth, that destroyed human slavery in the Grecian states and in the Roman empire. It was a great day when our Anglo-Saxon forefathers met their Norman conquerors face to face in mortal combat, that popular rights might survive and not perish. It was a great day when our forefathers demanded of King John, at Runnymede, the Magna Charta. It was a great day in the moral force of the world when Martin Luther rose up and demanded individual rights in church as well as state. It was a great day in the history of our civilization when Oliver Cromwell and his 'Ironsides' demanded of King Charles and the nobility, constitutional liberty for our ancestors. It was a great day in the world's history when the fathers of this republic caught up the inspiration of the Anglo-Saxon conception of human liberty and human rights and met in old Independence hall in Philadelphia and sounded the death knell to kingcraft on this continent. It was a great day with the French nation when Mirabeau stood in the states general of France and shook his mane and roared with his lion voice to the representatives of Louis the Sixteenth: 'You puppets of the king, go tell your master we have assembled here by the authority of the people,' and thus turned the tide that destroyed monarchy in France and established a democracy upon its ruins. It was a great day in the world's history when the fathers of this republic, in convention assembled, framed a constitution for these states and thereby created a federal republic, where human rights and personal liberty rest under the palladium of constitutional liberty. It will be a great day in the world's history when the American people shall rise up in their sovereign power, guided by a patriotic purpose and declare to such men as Rockefeller, Morgan, the Vanderbilts and the organized anarchists of this government that they cannot and shall not destroy this nation, but that their criminal institutions shall be destroyed by the sovereign will of the people, and that law and order shall prevail in this nation, and that the republic shall be perpetuated as a guarantee of constitutional liberty to coming generations. The issue is joined. These must be destroyed or our free institutions and our civilization must perish."

AN OLD COIN SALE took place in New York recently, and nine hundred sets of rare coins, metals and paper money, were sold. An Associated Press dispatch says: "These were the property of prominent New England, New York, New Jersey and Michigan collectors, and brought about \$6,000, the highest single sale being for \$60.50. There was an especially fine assortment of American coins of the colonial and continental periods. Collectors bid briskly for the Oak Tree shilling of 1652 and the Lord Baltimore shilling of 1659. These are extremely rare. A United States silver dollar of 1794, the first year of issue was sold for \$60.50. In the private issues of gold, a Mormon \$5 piece went for the highest amount. It was sold to a local collector for \$19.50. A \$1 gold piece of 1864 brought \$24. A Boston collector got a 1 cent piece of 1793 for just 450 times its face value."